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Entry of this amendment is requested.

It is believed that the §112 rejections of claims have been overcome by the amendments to the claims.

Claims 3 and 1-2, 4-5, 8-9, 18-20 and 27-29 were provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting for allegedly being unpatentable over claims 1-3, 5 and 9-18 of co-pending application no. 10/399,051 in view of Hatzelmann & Schudt ("Hatzelmann"). Applicants respectfully traverse because claims 1-3, 5 and 9-18 of the '051 application are no longer pending and were not pending on the day the final Office Action was mailed to Applicants. Thus, this rejection must be withdrawn.

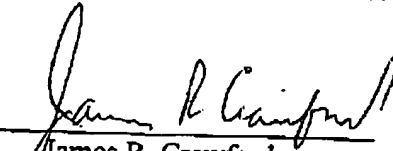
In view of the foregoing, allowance is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed to our Deposit Account No. 50-0624, under Order No. NY-HUBR 1261-US.

Respectfully submitted

FULBRIGHT & JAWORSKI L.L.P.

By


James R. Crawford
Reg. No: 39,155

666 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10103
(212) 318-3148